

Rosemary Lowe Collection (AC106)

Introduction:

The Rosemary Lowe Collection contains papers collected by Rosemary Smith Lowe, a civil rights activist in Kansas City.

Descriptive Summary:

Creator: Rosemary Lowe

Title: Rosemary Lowe Collection

Date Range: 1964- 2019

Size: 1.67 linear feet (5 boxes)

Collection Number: AC106

Donor Information:

James Edward White. Sr., December 2020, July 2022.

Citation Note:

Rosemary Lowe Collection (AC106), Black Archives of Mid-America, Kansas City, Missouri

Related Collections:

AC53 Watkins Family Collection

AC81 Freedom, Inc. Collection

AC84 Phil an Melba Curls Collection

AC86 Alan Wheat Collection

Administrative Information:

Reproduction Restrictions: Unrestricted.

Access Restrictions: Unrestricted.

Biographical Sketch:*Rosemary Smith Lowe- 1926-2020*

Born May 21, 1926, in Dumas, Arkansas, she and her family defied the racial covenants, a common redlining technique, designed to keep Black folk out of specific neighborhoods when they moved to Kansas City, Missouri's Santa Fe neighborhood in 1952. Later in life, Rosemary became deeply invested in the Santa Fe Are Council, and served as President of the Council. She also helped create Freedom, Inc. in 1962, served on the Democratic National Committee from 1980-1986, and in 1992, helped found the Local Investment Commission (LINC) and served as Vice Chair of LINC. Additionally, Rosemary was a licensed cosmetologist and served on the Missouri Board of Cosmetology from 1980-1984; served on the Board of Directors of the Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance; was an American Red Cross volunteer; and a longtime member of the Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church. During her life, she received dozens of awards for her leadership and service to the community.

Historical Sketch:*Local Investment Commission-*

Greater KC LINC, Inc, aka the Local Investment Commission (LINC), formed by Bert Berkley, Rosemary Lowe, Adele Hall, Herman Johnson, and Landon Rowland, in 1992, is a non-profit partnered with local public schools that focuses on improving the lives of families, especially children, in the KC area through emergency assistance, mental health services, counseling, community organizing, home improvement, parenting classes, and many more endeavors.

Santa Fe Neighborhood-

The Santa Fe Place Neighborhood in Kansas City was first settled by John Thornton in 1827. Then in 1835, the land was purchased by the Lockridge family; the family owned many enslaved individuals. Beginning in 1893, Lockridge family members began developing the area and named it Santa Fe Place. Santa Fe quickly became a neighborhood populated by some of the wealthiest families in KC. In 1931, the neighborhood passed a covenant that exclusively stated that no black families could purchase, inherit, or rent within the neighborhood for the next thirty years, a common practice during this time. Dr. D. M. Miller and his wife bought a house in the

neighborhood in 1948, the first black family to do so, fighting off several lawsuits in order to maintain their new home. One year later the Missouri Supreme Court declared the covenant illegal, and many more black families began buying houses in the neighborhood during the 1950s. The Santa Fe Area Council began in 1970, led by resident Willard C. Shelton. In 1986, Santa Fe Place became the first residential neighborhood in KCMO to be designated a historic district and to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Today Santa Fe Place Neighborhood stretches from Linwood to 27th and Prospect to Indiana. Additionally, one of the streets within this neighborhood is named for Lockridge.

Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church-

Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church began in 1917 at W28th and Detroit, as a Mission, led by Rev. J. R. Davis. John Thornton, who originally settled what is now the Santa Fe neighborhood, attended the first service led by Rev Davis. The Mission was renamed Morning Star when it formally became a church in 1919. They met at 2402 Superior Avenue. Davies retired in 1920 and was succeeded by Rev. Butler, who was then succeeded by Rev. C. C. Stewart in 1928. The church moved to a new site on Detroit Avenue in 1925; ten years later it was destroyed by a bomb. In 1936, Rev. S. L. Cole took over as pastor and the church met at 2226 Franklin Avenue. It was not until 1949, that they finally had a dedicated church building, located at 2674 E 63rd, but they moved to 650 Parkwood Drive in 1950. Rev. Col finally retired in 1976, and was followed by Rev. Earl Preston beginning in January 1977. Under Preston's leadership, the church again moved locations in 1997, this time residing at 10250 Shaker Blvd, after a brief stint at Glenville High School. Rev. Preston retired in December 2012. Rev. Clarence Hall became pastor in 2016 after several years as interim pastor.

Scope and Content Note:

Series 1: Local Investment Commission (LINC)

This series contains documents related to the establishment and activities of the Local Investment Commission (LINC).

Series 2: Neighborhoods

This series contains documents related to the preservation and revitalization of neighborhoods primarily in Kansas City.

Series 2.1: Santa Fe Neighborhood

This series contains documents created by the Santa Fe Area Council.

Series 2.2: Neighborhoods

This series contains reports on neighborhood revitalization.

Series 3: Politics

This series contains a variety of documents on the history of black politicians in Kansas City.

Series 4: Churches

This series contains a variety of documents related to different churches and church activities in Kansas City.

Series 4.1: Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church

This series contains documents that discuss the history and activities of the Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church in Kansas City, MO.

Series 4.2: National Baptist Convention

This series contains programs from National Baptist Conventions held in KC.

Series 4.3: Various Christian Programs

This series contains two programs and a pamphlet about the activities of different churches in KC.

Series 5: Ephemera

This series contains a range of documents including certificates awarded to Rosemary Lowe, a holiday card, an obituary for Katherine Marshall, and documents related to the KC Police Department, including a copy of the Informant Newsletter.

Series 6: Photographs

This series contains 51 photos that belonged to Rosemary Lowe. She is featured in only two of them.

Collection Inventory:**Series 1: Local Investment Commission (LINC)**

- f. 1 LINC Board Governance Manual- Draft
- f. 2 LINC Board of Governance Manual
- f. 3 LINC Board of Governance Manual 3-ring binder
- f. 4 LINC Commission Meeting Announcements, 2001
- f. 5 LINC Commission Meeting Programs, 2010-2013
- f. 6 LINC Commission Meeting Programs, 2015-2019
- f. 7 LINC Financial Documents, 2002, 2012/2013
- f. 8 LINC Infographics
- f. 9 Black History Month, 2013-2017
- f. 10 The Local Investment Commission: A Quiet Revolution [VHS]

Series 2: Neighborhoods**Series 2.1: Santa Fe Neighborhood**

- f. 11 National Register of Historic Places Certificate, 1986 [photocopies]
- f. 12 Certificate of Incorporation, 1986
- f. 13 Santa Fe Twenty-Ninth Street Neighborhood Club Directory
- f. 14 Map, 2013
- f. 15 Correspondence, 1993-2005
- f. 16 Proclamation from the Mayor of Omaha, NE, 1987
- f. 17 Santa Fe Neighborhood History Pamphlets

- f. 18 Certificates of Appreciation [blank]
- f. 19 Santa Fe Area Council, 2013/2014
- f. 20 Santa Fe Neighborhood 50th Anniversary Celebration
- f. 21 “A Nationally Historic Past Leading to a Brighter Future”, 1948-1988 [4 copies]
- f. 22 A Forty Year Celebration of Tradition and Heritage Within the Black Community, 1988
- f. 23 Kansas City’s Santa Fe Neighborhood: Analysis & Report, 1982
- f. 24 *Santa Fe Place: Moving to the Top of the Hill* by Jami Parkinson, 1994

Series 2.2: Neighborhoods

- f. 25 Recommendations for a Neighborhood Based Strategy in Kansas City, 2004
- f. 26 Center for the Study of Social Policy: Neighborhood Strategies to Support Families, 1997
- f. 27 1970 Census of Housing: Metropolitan Housing Characteristics, 1972
- f. 28 Resident Monitors Report of Neighborhood Improvement Program, 1973
- f. 29 URBAN Neighborhood Improvement Proposal
- f. 30 Addresses

Series 3: Politics

- f. 31 State Government Affirmative Action in Mid-America, 1978
- f. 32 Contemporary Black History Makers in the Kansas City Community
- f. 33 Missouri Sunshine Law, 2008
- f. 34 Congressional Record- Senate
- f. 35 Correspondence, 2003
- f. 36 A Tribute to Leadership [Phil Curls], 1972-1998
- f. 37 Leon Jordan Scholarship and Monument Fund, 1977
- f. 38 Elect... Tindall Pamphlets, 1980
- f. 39 Senator Yvonne Wilson Legislative Report, 2009
- f. 40 *We Didn’t Expect You to be so Good At It: Freedom, Inc. and Black Political Empowerment in Kansas City, Missouri, 1962—2007*. Dissertation by Michah W. Kubic, Howard University, 2012

Series 4: Churches**Series 4.1: Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church**

- f. 41 MSBC Newsletter, 2007-2008
- f. 42 MSBC Newsletter, 2009-2010
- f. 43 MSBC Newsletter, 2011-2013
- f. 44 Christian Stewardship
- f. 45 Centennial Celebration "Old Endings and New Beginnings", 2005
- f. 46 Morning Star's Kitch & Dining Area Policy
- f. 47 Certificates from MSMBCJC, 2011

Series 4.2: National Baptist Convention

- f. 48 130th Annual Session National Baptist Convention, 2010
- f. 49 136th Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention, 2016

Series 4.3: Various Christian Programs

- f. 50 New Era District Congress of Christian Education 68th Annual Session, 2010
- f. 51 7th Annual Summit of Greater Kansas City, 2014
- f. 52 Combined Service Thanksgiving Day, 2018

Series 5: Ephemera

- f. 53 Certificates, 1964-2019
- f. 54 Letterhead
- f. 55 Holiday Card, 2006
- f. 56 Obituary for Katherine Marshall, 2006
- f. 57 Fresh ST.ART
- f. 58 Informant Newsletter, 2011
- f. 59 Ideas for Recruiting African-American Police Officers

Series 6: Photographs

- f. 60 Prints #1-2
- f. 61 Print #3 and frame
- f. 62 Prints #4-15
- f. 63 Prints #16-31

- f. 64 Prints #32-51
 f. 65 Print Envelopes, 1977

Processed by Laura Darnell, Archivist, August 2024.

Sources:

African American Heritage Trail of Kansas City. “Santa Fe Neighborhood — African American Heritage Trail of Kansas City,” n.d. <https://aahtkc.org/santafeneighborhood>.

Lester, Chris, and Chris Lester. “Rosemary Lowe Remembered as the ‘Strong, Proud Voice of a Movement.’” Flatland - Kansas City PBS’ Nonprofit Journalism Source, July 10, 2024. <https://flatlandkc.org/news-issues/rosemary-lowe-remembered-as-the-strong-proud-voice-of-a-movement/>.

Lindsay, Ronald, Jackie Robinson, John L. Brooks, Cheryl Caldwell, Algy Mason, Shalonn Curls, Troy Nash, and Quinton Lucas. The Celebration of the Life of Mrs. Rosemary Smith Lowe. Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church of Jesus Christ, 2020. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5075895f84ae84c1f4ec0443/t/5f75d02d15e1c70b35fac3ac/1601556528825/The+Celebration+of+the+Life+of+Mrs.+Rosemary+Lowe+with+photos+16pg+v3.pdf>.

Local Investment Commission. “What Is LINC? — Local Investment Commission,” n.d. <https://kclinc.org/aboutus>.

Morning Star Baptist Church. “History - Morning Star Baptist Church,” June 1, 2018. <https://www.morningstarbaptist.com/history/#:~:text=In%201919%2C%20the%20mission%20became,people%20to%20see%20and%20attend>.

“Rosemary Smith Lowe | Kansas City Black History,” n.d. <https://kcblackhistory.org/articles/rosemary-smith-lowe>.

———. “Rosemary Smith Lowe Obituary | September 22, 2020 | Kansas City, MO.” Rosemary Smith Lowe Obituary | September 22, 2020 | Kansas City, MO, September 28, 2020. <https://www.watkinsheritage.com/obituary/Rosemary-SmithLowe>.